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C O N F I D E N T I A L LJUBLJANA 000729

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DEPT FOR EUR/ERA, EUR/NCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SI](#)  
SUBJECT: SLOVENIA IN ADVANCE OF THE NOVEMBER 13-14 FOREIGN  
MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

REF: SECSTATE 183545

Classified By: COM Thomas B. Robertson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) Polecon Chief met on 8 November with Slovenian MFA EU Correspondent Aljaz Arih to discuss reftel points.

¶2. (C) Western Balkans: Arih agreed with the US view that Serbian elections had little to do with final status discussions/decisions on Kosovo. He thought a slight delay might be necessary, but if Serbian elections slipped too far into 2007, Slovenia would not support a significant delay in SE Ahtisaari's efforts. In last month's GAERC, Arih said FM Rupel had strongly urged the EU to be more "flexible" with Serbia, meaning it should offer Serbia something "substantial" such as visa facilitation for students and business people as a signal that there is a European future for Serbia. He said he thought this idea might be further discussed on 13 November, but because of several members' strong objections, stability and association talks would not re-open absent Serbia's clear cooperation with ICTY. Arih also asked where the US thought Russia would ultimately come down on Kosovo, saying he found recent messages from Russia confusing.

¶3. (C) Russia: Arih thought the GAERC would be focused on what mandate to give the European Commission vis a vis Russia and the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the upcoming November 24 EU-Russia Summit. Several members were still balking at handing over authority to negotiate on energy, and others were trying to include a position that Russia should fully implement its Istanbul Commitments (to withdraw Russian troops from non-Russian territory).

¶4. (C) Israel: The GOS fully supports the work of the Quartet. Arih said that support of the Karni initiative was under discussion but no decision had yet been made. He also said that the EU planned to extend the successful Rafah mission. Arih expressed concern over recent Israeli forces action in Gaza and said Israel should be more restrained and use "proportional force" to address its security concerns. A priority of the GOS remains the release of Israeli Corporal Shalit.

¶5. (C) Lebanon: Echoing our concern over Syrian influence in Lebanon, Arih said the GOS agreed with our view that the US and EU needed to work in concert to support the Siniora government. While UNIFIL is up to full force, Arih said Slovenia's contribution of troops was being held up by negotiations with the EU partner who would be supporting the Slovenian troops on the ground. He said he expected the GAERC to devote time to the discussion of financial support and reconstruction for Lebanon, and that it was the hope of the GOS that more financial support would be provided.

¶6. (SBU) Human Rights: Arih took on board our points on Uzbekistan an Cuba as well as Iran.

¶7. (C) Iran: While not responding directly to the call for swift action on sanctions for Iran, Arih expressed interest in USG views of the Russian proposal on a center for the production of nuclear material and further detail on Russian and Chinese "attempts to weaken current draft and delay progress." Poloff agreed to seek greater detail on these points.  
ROBERTSON